The Female Tatler.

Written by a Society of Ladies.

Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat ?

From Monday February 6, to Wednesday February 8, 1710.

Emilia's Day.

AMONG the numerous Errors I daily grieve at, there is none gives me more vexation than that populous and monstrous Opinion, *A Man may be too Honest*, and that a vast Number of Human kind suffer on that very score; when to the great and unspeakable Misfortune of this present Hour I write in, were a strict Examination made, wou'd Men turn their Eyes inwards, be Serious in their Inspections and Sincere in their Reports, concerning the State of their own Consciences, and the Original and ultimate of Mortal Actions, 'tis extreamly to be fear'd, few wou'd be found really Honest; yet, is a diligent Sollicitor for a Place disappointed of his Aim, you shall hear all his Party lay the Fault on obstinate Virtue, and blame his Ignorance, that cou'd hope to Rise with all that Merit hanging on his Soul: Does a Tradesman fail, his Relations shall soon give you the reason why, and convince you he was too Honest to Thrive. Now I fancy there is no mistake can be half so Pernitious as this to the Publick Good, for I'll appeal to every sound Memory and weak Understanding in Being, which must be allow'd a considerable part of this Age we live in, as they may be divided into the two great Branches of the Learn'd and the Credulous, whether Examples of this Nature, which have been frequently and emphatically related by or to them, have not deter'd them from being so good as otherwise they might have been; for who wou'd not shun the Rock on which so many have been cast away, or who wou'd wish his Son to take that Path which led his Father to an early Ruin. This appears to me not lopping the Luxurious Branches, but striking at the very Root of Virtue: There are indeed some Courageous Spirits, who nothing daunted at the Difficulties they are like to meet with, find Resolution enough to follow the bent of their Noble Inclinations: To these I address my self, and let them tell me, if upon the pleasing review of their past Life, they can recollect one good Deed, acted purely on the Principles of Justice, separate from any By-regard to Gain or Ostentation, that has not been follow'd with some Remarkable and unexpected Temporal Advantage. Were the World throughly perswaded of this, I cannot but believe it wou'd mend, the Best wou'd be confirmed in their Choice and encourag'd on their way, and the Worst wou'd be struck with useful Emulation, and a desire to imitate what they found so Commendable in itself, and valuable in its Consequences to Human Life. I remember an Example of this Nature, and because I have never met the Story in Print, I'll venture to insert it here: If it shou'd prove better known than I am aware of, you shall return it upon my Hands again, and I promise to give you a newer in exchange, tho' I am at the trouble of inventing it.

'A Poor Vicar living in *Shropshire*, at a small obscure 'Village, had for many Years conceiv'd a strong desire 'to see *London*; he had heard of the Wealth, the Pride 'and Popularity of the Renown'd *Augusta*, and found 'it hard in that humble State of Life to credit the Account; but having a large Family and small Income, 'knew not how to compose his Design, for he cou'd not 'spare Money enough from the Necessaries of Being, 'to defray the Expences of so long a Journey, till by frequent Discourses of the Beauties, Antiquities and Wonders it contain'd, he had inspir'd the Clerk with equal 'Curiosity, and by keeping a frugal Summer, and receiving a bounteous *Michaelmas*, they found themselves able to compass by United Forces, what neither 'durst attempt alone.

'For *London* they both set out, nor shall I trouble 'you with any Difficulties or Disasters they might probably meet on the Road, but bring them soon and 'safe to the desired *Goal*, where they found every 'thing exceed report. Some Days they pass'd in admiring the Temples, Palaces, and other Glories of 'Architecture; they visited the Interr'd Living and the 'Immortal Dead, till their little Stock began to remind 'them of the Rural Pleasures of Neighbourhood, where 'they shou'd find constant Opportunities of relating 'what they had been now Eye-witnesses of, with what'ever Improvement their Observations or Applications 'shou'd think useful. The last Day they gave themselves to view the Ancient *Tower*, that had out-liv'd 'so many Ages; the Crowns that had grac'd the Temples of so many succeeding Monarchs, the Venerable 'Lyons, and the Ships that Traffick'd to new Worlds. 'These pleasing Objects chain'd their Eyes, till Night 'stole insensibly upon them: In their return it being 'Dark, and they not well acquainted with the way, 'easily lost it, and straggling into a Silent unfrequented 'Alley, the Curate going near the Houses, fell into the 'Hollow above the Cellar Window, and groping to 'find by what means he cou'd best get up again, he felt 'a large weighty Bag, which he thought it highly prudent to bring along with him; and after some little 'outside Examination, reasonably concluding it to be 'Money, the Clerk broke out into a great Rapture, we 'are, says he, the luckiest that ever mistook their Road, 'this is a Bag of Fortunes own laying, 'tis Money, and 'we are made for ever; we are both Rich and Happy: 'No, return'd the Curate, they are happy that have lost 'it; for it is fallen into the Hands of Honesty, who will 'be Careful to restore it to its right Owner. Here he knock'd

'knock'd at the Door, and after a little time some of 'the Family open'd a Window, for they were a Bed, 'and ask'd what they wou'd have: *My Name*, says the 'Curate, *is* Parr, *I live at the* Cliffe *in* Shropshire, *not 'many Miles from* Shrewsbury, *I have found a Bag of 'Money here by your Window, and if it be yours, come 'to the Three Cups in* Honey-Lane Market, *where I have 'been this Week, and give me an account what Sum and 'Coin it includes, that I may be satisfy'd, and you may 'then receive it from my Hands with Cheerfulness. I 'design'd to have gone out of Town as to Morrow, but I 'will stay Two Days longer, to Discharge my self of this 'Wealth with Integrity.* The People bid him good 'Night, assur'd him they had no Claim to the Treasure, 'wonder'd at his Honesty, and shut the Window. At 'last with much difficulty, they found the way to their 'Inn, and having told the Master of the House their 'Fortune, they ventur'd to call for a Bottle of Wine, 'and order'd a Fowl for Supper, not doubting but the 'Person who shou'd own the Bag, wou'd reward them 'with more than wou'd pay for so small an Entertain-'ment. About Four in the Morning they heard a vio-'lent Alarm at the Gate, and easily guess'd the Occa-'sion; a Gentleman ask'd if Mr *Parr* did not Lodge 'there, and being brought into his Chamber, Sir, cry'd 'he in great extacy, I see my Money, and therefore 'need not enquire of it, but assure you that I owe you 'all my present Joys, and all I ever can know for the 'future; since I had been utterly ruin'd, had you not 'been Proof against the most powerful Temptation Man 'can meet with; 'tis the All I am Master of in the 'World. At the Request of the Woman I Love, and 'that can well reward my Complyance, I have sold 'my Estate in Town to purchase one near her in the 'Counrry, where she chuses to Live. I sent my Ser-'vant whom I cou'd trust as my self to receive it, and 'whether he was pursued by Thieves or taken with 'Convulsions, he was found on the Ground near the 'House you took up the Money by, Bruis'd and almost 'Dead. They brought him home, and he had just Po-'wer to bid me enquire in that Place, and remains Si-'lent with Weakness: That had it fallen into the Hands 'of a Knave, it had been impossible for me ever to have 'trac'd it further: That you may know it is mine, there 'is Five Hundred Pieces of Gold in a Green Silk Bag, 'seal'd with my Coat of Arms, as you see it engrav'd 'on this Cornelian. The Curate look'd, and finding 'it as the Gentleman spoke, resign'd the Bag to the right 'Owner, who with Millions of Acknowledgments took 'his Leave without offering him the smallest Piece there. 'This unexpected Ingratitude made the Travellers look 'blank, they had been Merry the last Night at their own 'Expence, and must suffer for it the rest of their Jour-'ney. By this time the Landlord came up to Congra-'tulate them upon their handsome Present, which he 'did not in the least suspect they cou'd have miss'd; 'the Curate undeceiv'd him, but added, that he was 'more than paid, in having so great an Opportunity of 'proving his own Heart; that if when they had paid 'him, they had left but enough to carry them Home, 'was all he wish'd. This drew Tears even into the Inn-'keeper's Eyes, the Force of so Beautiful an Example 'struck his Mind with utmost Veneration; Sir, said he, 'if you and the Clerk will bless my House this Twelve-'month, you shall be as Welcome as my Brothers: 'You shall pay nothing, and after that I will furnish 'you with Moneys to go Home. In the mean while 'the Gentleman that own'd the Money came back, and 'asking a Thousand Pardons for his Forgetfulness, the 'Joy to find his whole Dependance again, had trans-'ported him beyond the Power of Thought; he drew 'out Fifty Pieces, and with some Regret that he cou'd 'not at this time give as he ought, he beg'd and com-'pell'd him to accept of them, leaving them Richer 'than they had ever wish'd themselves.

'Sometime after this the Civil Wars broke out, and 'Mr *Parr* was taken by *Oliver*'s Party as a Spy, and 'Condemn'd by a Council of War; when one of them 'suddenly rose up and desired his Name, and ask'd if 'he found not a Considerable Sum of Money such a Year 'in *London*; and finding he was not mistaken, he as-'sur'd them they shou'd acquit the Prisoner or Con-'demn him; and having made them this Relation, 'they unanimously consented to give him Life and Li-'berty. Thus the Honesty of the Curate, the Genero-sity of the Host, and the Gratitude of the Gentleman, deserve to be recorded with Characters Indelible; and tho' I can only show you where it preserv'd the Life of the chief Person in my Brief History, I make no question but that the other Two found their Re-ward.

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